



Stanton hopes for 'win-win' solution on freeway's route

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It's hard to have a community discussion in Ahwatukee these days without the subject of the proposed South Mountain Freeway coming up.

Thursday morning's coffee chat with Phoenix City Councilman Greg Stanton was no exception. Freeway congestion, red-light cameras and even light-rail construction were among the topics Stanton addressed with a small group of residents who met at Desert Foothills United Methodist Church.

Stanton holds the informal talks periodically at locations in his district.

Regarding the freeway, Stanton restated his position of opposing the proposed alignment along what is now Pecos Road and said he hoped a "win/win" solution could be worked out, perhaps moving the freeway farther south on to Gila River Indian Community land.

He said he would also keep an eye on the proposed expansion of the Broadway Curve on Interstate 10 through Tempe. One proposal calls for widening the freeway from 12 lanes to 24 in that area, to relieve congestion on that heavily used stretch of road.

"If that happens there could have an impact on traffic throughout the Valley and there could be less of a need for a freeway out here," Stanton said. "That's a factor ADOT (Arizona Department of Transportation) would have to take into consideration. It's obviously a very relevant and important consideration with that."

The councilman also mentioned the need for photo enforcement for red-light runners on Pecos Road and was asked about ongoing light-rail construction throughout Phoenix and the East Valley.

"It's not a panacea (for traffic congestion)," Stanton said. "It won't end congestion, but it will slow the growth of congestion. But light rail is just part of the solution."